

What is claimed is:

Substantially *identical*

1. A preformed sleeve for covering a pot having an upper end, a lower end, and an outer peripheral surface, comprising:
 - a base portion having an upper end, a lower end, and an interior space when opened, the base portion initially having a flat condition prior to being opened for receiving the pot into the interior space and having a tapered shape when in the flat condition;
 - a skirt portion extending from the upper end of the base portion; and
 - a plurality of substantially unconnected, vertically oriented, expandable folds in the base portion, and wherein when the pot is disposed within the interior space of the base portion and pressure is exerted on the base portion by the pot, the expandable folds in the base portion expand to cause the base portion to cover and surround the outer peripheral surface of the pot.
2. The preformed sleeve of claim 1 further comprising an upper portion extending from the skirt portion and detachable therefrom via a detaching element therein.

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4. The preformed sleeve of claim 1 further defined as constructed from a material having a thickness in a range of from about 0.1 mil to about 30 mils.

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5. The preformed sleeve of claim 1 further defined as constructed from a material having a thickness in a range of from about 0.5 mil to about 10 mils.

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6. The preformed sleeve of claim 1 further defined as constructed from a material having a thickness in a range of from about 1 mil to about 5 mils.

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6. The preformed sleeve of claim 1 further defined as constructed from a material selected from the group consisting of treated or untreated paper, metal foil, polymeric film, non-polymeric film, cardboard, fiber, cloth, burlap, and laminations or combinations thereof.

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8. The preformed sleeve of claim 1 wherein the plurality of expandable folds are selected from the group consisting of pleats, folds each having a z-shaped cross section, or accordion-type folds.

8. The preformed sleeve of claim 1 further comprising a portion for serving as a handle or support device.

9. The preformed sleeve of claim 1 wherein the base portion has a drainage hole.

10. The preformed sleeve of claim 1 wherein the plurality of folds are continuous between the base portion and the skirt portion.

11. The preformed sleeve of claim 1 wherein the lower end of the base portion is closed.

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13. A preformed sleeve for covering a pot having an upper end, a lower end, and an outer peripheral surface, comprising:

a lower portion having an upper end, a lower end having a bottom, and an interior space when opened, the lower portion initially having a flat condition prior to being opened for receiving the pot into the interior space and having a tapered shape when in the flat condition;

an upper portion extending from the lower portion and which detachable therefrom via a detaching element;

and

a plurality of substantially unconnected vertically oriented, expandable folds in the lower portion and wherein when the pot is disposed within the interior space of the lower portion and pressure is exerted on the lower portion by the pot, the expandable folds in the lower portion expand to cause the base portion to cover and surround at least a portion of the outer peripheral surface of the pot.

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14. The preformed sleeve of claim 13 wherein the upper portion is further defined as being sized to substantially surround and enclose a floral disposed within the pot.

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14. The preformed sleeve of claim 13 further defined as
constructed from a material having a thickness in a range of from
about 0.1 mil to about 30 mils.

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15. The preformed sleeve of claim 13 further defined as
constructed from a material selected from the group consisting of
treated or untreated paper, metal foil, polymeric film, non-
polymeric film, cardboard fiber, cloth, burlap, and laminations or
combinations thereof.

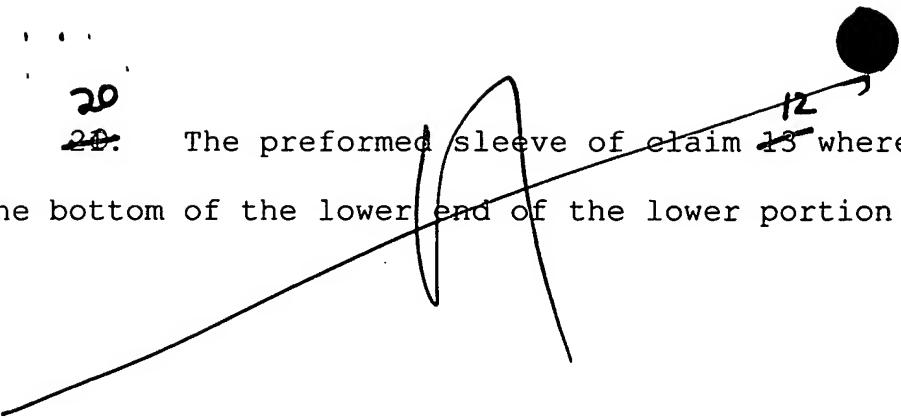
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16. The preformed sleeve of claim 13 wherein the extendable
folds are selected from the group consisting of pleats, folds each
having a z-shaped cross section, or accordion-type folds.

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17. The preformed sleeve of claim 13 further comprising a
portion for serving as a handle or support device.

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18. The preformed sleeve of claim 13 wherein the lower
portion has a drainage hole.

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19. The preformed sleeve of claim 13 wherein the plurality
of extendable folds are continuous.

20. The preformed sleeve of claim 13 wherein
the bottom of the lower end of the lower portion is closed.



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21. A method of covering a pot having an upper end, a lower end, and an outer peripheral surface, comprising the steps of:

providing a preformed sleeve comprising:

a base portion having an upper end, a lower end, and an interior space when opened, the base portion initially having a flat condition prior to being opened for receiving the pot into the interior space and having a tapered shape when in the flat condition,

a skirt portion extending from the upper end of the base portion, and

a plurality of substantially unconnected, vertically oriented, expandable folds in the base portion; and

disposing the pot into the interior space of the base portion wherein pressure is exerted upon the base portion by the pot causing the expandable folds in the base portion to expand to cause the base portion to cover and surround at least a portion of the outer peripheral surface of the pot.

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22. The method of claim 21 wherein in the step of providing a preformed sleeve, the preformed sleeve further comprises an upper portion extending from the skirt portion and which is detachable therefrom via a detaching element.

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~~24.~~ The method of claim ~~20~~ wherein in the step of providing a preformed sleeve the plurality of expandable folds are continuous between the base portion and the skirt portion.

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~~25.~~ The method of claim ~~23~~ wherein in the step of providing the preformed sleeve the upper portion is sized to substantially surround and enclose a floral grouping disposed within the pot.

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26. A preformed sleeve for covering a pot, having an upper end, a lower end, and an outer peripheral surface, comprising:

a base portion having an upper end, a lower end, and an interior space when opened, the base portion initially having a flat condition prior to being opened for receiving the pot into the interior space and having a tapered shape when in the flat condition; and

a plurality of substantially unconnected, vertically oriented, expandable folds in the base portion, and wherein when the pot is disposed within the interior space of the base portion and pressure is exerted on the base portion by the pot, the expandable folds in the base portion expand to cause the base portion to cover and surround at least a portion of the outer peripheral surface of the pot.

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27. The preformed sleeve of claim 26 further comprising an upper portion detachable via a detaching element.

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28. The preformed sleeve of claim 26 wherein the plurality of expandable folds further comprises a plurality of pleats, a

plurality of folds each having a z-shaped cross section, or a plurality of accordion-type folds.

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29. The preformed sleeve of claim 26 wherein the lower end of the base portion is closed.

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30. A method of covering a pot having an upper end, a lower end, and an outer peripheral surface, comprising the steps of:

providing a preformed sleeve comprising:

a base portion having an upper end, a lower end, and an interior space when opened, the base portion initially having a flat condition prior to being opened for receiving the pot into the interior space and having a tapered shape when in the flat condition; and
a plurality of substantially unconnected, vertically oriented, expandable folds in the base portion; and

disposing the pot into the interior space of the base portion of the preformed sleeve wherein pressure is exerted upon the base portion by the pot causing the expandable folds in the base portion to expand to cause the base portion to cover and surround at least a portion of the outer peripheral surface of the pot.

31. The method of claim *30* wherein in the step of providing the preformed sleeve, the preformed sleeve further comprises an upper portion detachable via a detaching element in the preformed sleeve.